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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 002039

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PTER](#) [PGOV](#) [IZ](#) [IR](#)

SUBJECT: MEK IN CAMP ASHRAF: U.S. PROVIDING MEDICAL AID

REF: BAGHDAD 2027 AND PREVIOUS.

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Robert Ford for reasons 1.4(b)&(d)

¶1. (C) Summary. The GOI has agreed to allow U.S. forces to provide medical assistance to the Mujahideen-e-Khalq (MEK) and a U.S. team is doing so. The GOI, however, is amassing forces on the perimeters of Ashraf. The GOI have relieved COL Sa'di Habib Hussein al-Dulaymi of command of the forces currently located at Ashraf and replaced him with Iraqi Army Staff Major General Tariq al-ab-Wahal Jasim Mahdi al-Izzawi, Commander of the Diyala Operations Center. Approximately 4000 Iraqi forces are currently located at Ashraf, with more forces being sent, according to the GOI and TF-134 sources. Although relieved of military command, COL Sa'di is being sent by the GOI to Ashraf to negotiate with the MEK, who are currently on a hunger strike. With the amassing of GOI forces, the lack of a cohesive plan on the part of the GOI, and the determination of the MEK, we estimate further clashes still are possible. The CDA and other Embassy officials have met with the Prime Minister's Chief-of-Staff (PM's COS) to discuss the current situation, explaining the impact of GOI actions on the international community and offering medical assistance to the GOI for the residents of Ashraf. End Summary.

¶2. (C) On July 30, Charge met with the PM's COS to discuss the current situation, as well as its effect on international public opinion. During the meeting, GOI Ashraf Committee Chairman Ali Abdul Amir al-Yassery was summoned to the PM's office. He appeared optimistic about the progress of GOI forces in Ashraf, claiming that, in order to avoid further clashes with Ashraf residents, the GOI had no intention of penetrating deeper into Ashraf. He further asserted the residents of Ashraf refused medical assistance from the GOI when offered on July 29. (Note: Al-Yassery claimed in meetings with EmbOffs on July 29 that residents denied suffering casualties. Nevertheless he noted the GOI had detained many injured on its side of the clash, treated them and detained them in Baquba. (reftel). End Note.) CDA stressed to the PM's COS that an American team was available to help injured Ashraf residents and the COS instructed al-Yassery in our presence to allow that.

¶3. (C) After being informed of the number of dead and wounded at the MEK hospital late on July 29, GOI military officials confirmed on July 30 that they would allow U.S. forces to deliver medical supplies and medical care to the residents of Ashraf. U.S. forceCZxQeQsignificant areas are still under the command and control of the MEK. The GOI does not appear to have a cohesive plan to bring this situation to a satisfactory conclusion. Instead, they have convinced themselves that amassing forces and replacing their current commander in Ashraf will resolve the standoff. The GOI is convinced that the placement of an Iraqi police station on Ashraf was their

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ultimate goal and further engagement with the MEK was not considered. Again, the GOI have underestimated the determination of the MEK and their ability to activate their media machine to capitalize on the ineptitude of the GOI regarding their implementation of their Ashraf "plan." MFA COS informed the CDA that the Iranian Embassy has been demarching the GOI on the subject of Ashraf. He claims their tone has become more insistent, stating the situation is so "brittle" in Iran at this time and the MEK continue to involve themselves in Iranian matters, to the irritation of the Iranian government. It is unclear whether Iranian influence affected the decision of the GOI to go into Ashraf or whether it merely served to escalate the GOI timeline for entry. End Comment.  
FORD